

**James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, July 23, 1793, from  
Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe Correspondence,  
Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W. Gawalt,  
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

**James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson**

Richmond July 23. 1793

Dear Sir

I came here yesterday upon some business in the office of the Ct. of Chancery. I shall return to morrow. I shall see Barrett to day & give him a time to Mr. Pope for the adjustment of his claim.

Mr. Lewis & Divers have valued Thenia & children but have not furnished me the statement. They will on my return. I am likewise in yr. debt for the Encyclopedia. Be so obliging as state in yr. next the amount & I will include the whole in the same bond. Tis impossible to adjust the transaction in a manner more agreeable to me & therefore hope it will likewise be so to you.

The information contained in yr. last of the prospect of a war with Spain is truly alarming, but I still hope it may be voided. As it embarks us of course in the genl. war of Europe & puts our fortunes afloat on the event. The unanimity of our Executive councils are the subjects begets strange suspicions with me.

By the proclamation so far as it had a right, we are separated from France. The progress of the war then is not intended to be in great harmony with that nation, as for the support of publick liberty. We shall however be at war with Spain upon a private quarrel of our

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own-for instance for the Mississippi, & wh. I hear has been lately guaranteed by Britain to that power, but the guarantee has not been published & perhaps not intended to be. The commencement in the object & parties to the war, contains as little hostility to Britain & monarchy as possible; the odium of it too with the present Indian war will be placed to acct of the western country, already unpopular enough throughout the continent. Britain it is obvious will prescribe the terms of the peace & what these may be, in the unsettled state of the world with respect to govt. & the disposition of many with respect to the westn. country & torn to pieces as we are, by a malignant monarchy faction is altogether incertain. Besides upon what principle can it be accounted for, that the certificate party lose the support of Hamilton upon this occasion furnished them upon all others? The certificates are in the dust if we are involved in a war, & he has shewn he could bear any kind of indignity from the Bh. Ct. The whole is misterious to me. I fear the party, finding its affrs. desperate and that by fair discussion before the publick it will be crushed and

that the publick credit partly by the mismagment of the public finances and partly by the present war whose effect is felt, are disposed to precipitate us into some dreadful catastrophe wh. may end we know not where. The circumstance of a Sph. War is of all others the happiest expedient for them. They have shewn themselves the patrons & advocates for peace by the procla. a war, and for the Mississippi or souther boundaries will not be theirs-its odium will fall elsewhere.

I am (against every invitation to war) an advocate for peace. The insults of Spn. Britain or any other of the continent powers I deem no more worthy our notice as a nation, that those of a lunatic to a man in health. For I consider them as desperate & raving mad. To expose ourselves to their fury if we can get out of their way would be as imprudent in the former as the latter case. To preserve peace will no doubt be difficult but by accomplishing it, we shew our wisdom & magnanimity. We secure to our people the enjoyment of a dignified repose, by indulging which they will be prosperous & happy.

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There is no sacrifice I woud. not be willing to make for the sake of France & her cause but I think by this course we advance her interests and I am persuaded she must so understand it. In the mean time, whatever the principles of neutrality woud. allow of shoud. be granted her.

I observe a curious publication signed "Pacificus" written no doubt by

Mr. H. the principles it contains are really novel. The President he says may of himself annul any treaty or part of a treaty he thinks fit, as the organ of communication with foreign powers, that he has done so by the proclm. In respect to the guarantee, wh. he has declared void, & the other two articles he has permitted to remain in force. It contains other doctrines equally exceptionable but wh. I have not time at present to notice nor you I presume to read. With great sincerity I am yr. affectionate friend & servant Jas. Monroe

[P.S.] I recd. Mr. Freneau's note excusing the omission abt. his paper respecting wh. I return an answer. Is it not surprising the pamphlet entitled "An Examination &c." has not reached this. I never could obtain a view of it till the other day a copy was presented me for perusal.

RC (Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress).